

CLAIMS

I claim:

1. A method for using a computer system to provide a user
5 interface to a text, comprising the steps of:

a. presenting, on a display controlled by the
computer system, an outline of the text, wherein

i. a word or phrase appearing in the text is an
element of the text;

10 ii. a plurality of elements of the text are
included as elements of the outline;

iii. each element of the outline represents a
portion of the text;

iv. elements of the outline comprise
substantially less text than the entire
text;

v. substantially all portions of the text are
represented by at least one element of the
outline;

20 vi. the positional and hierarchical relationship
between the elements of the text is
maintained on the outline; and

b. performing, in response to a signal from a user
of the computer system, an operation on an entire
25 portion of the text represented by at least one

element of the outline.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of providing a user the ability to select an element in the outline, such that the operation is performed on the entire
5 portion of text referred to by the element.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of displaying a result of the operation on the text represented by an element of the outline in a location on the outline corresponding to the element.

10 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the elements of text presented on the outline relate to the structure of the text.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the outline is computer generated.

15 6. The method of claim 1, further providing to the user the ability to expand and collapse items in the outline.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the portion of the outline shown at any given time corresponds to the cursor location in the original text.

20 8. The method of claim 3, further providing a link to the original text from a result displayed on the outline.

9. The method of claim 3, wherein the operation comprises reverse-indexing of the text referred to by the outline element.

25 10. The method of claim 9 wherein the words in the

reverse-index are provided in alphabetical order.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the operation comprises searching within the text referred to by the outline element.

5 12. The method of claim 2, wherein the operation comprises printing the text referred to by the outline element.

13. The method of claim 2, wherein the operation comprises copying the text referred to by the outline element.

10 14. The method of claim 1, wherein the operation comprises calculating a parameter related to the length of the text referred to by the outline element.

15. The method of claim 1, wherein the operation comprises identifying material related to that referred to by the outline element.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the operation comprises using a reference work to look up material contained in a portion of text referred to by the outline element.

17. The method of claim 1, wherein the operation comprises identifying annotations to the portion of text referred to by the outline element.

18. The method of claim 1, wherein the operation comprises calculating a parameter related to the time spent viewing text referred to by an outline element.

25 19. The method of claim 1, wherein the operation comprises

moving the text referred to by the outline element to a different location.

20. The method of claim 1, wherein the operation comprises partially displaying text referred to by the outline element on the outline.

21. A computer system for displaying text, comprising

- a. A display device controlled by the computer
- b. Said display device imaging a portion of text controlled by the computer system,
- c. an outline of the text, a portion of which is presented on the display device, such that:
 - i. a word or phrase appearing in the text is an element of the text;
 - ii. a plurality of elements of the text are included as elements of the outline;
 - iii. each element of the outline represents a portion of the text;
 - iv. elements of the outline comprise substantially less text than the entire text;
 - v. substantially all portions of the text are represented by at least one element of the outline;
 - vi. the positional and hierarchical relationship between the elements of the text is

maintained on the outline; and

- d. a mechanism to respond to a signal from a user of the computer system by performing an operation on an entire portion of the text represented by at least one element of the outline.

22. A computer memory storage device encoded with a computer program for using a computer system to display electronic text comprising:

a. an outline of the text, such that:

- i. a word or phrase appearing in the text is an element of the text;
- ii. a plurality of elements of the text are included as elements of the outline;
- iii. each element of the outline represents a portion of the text;
- iv. elements of the outline comprise substantially less text than the entire text;
- v. substantially all portions of the text are represented by at least one element of the outline;
- vi. the positional and hierarchical relationship between the elements of the text is maintained on the outline; and

b. a mechanism to respond to a signal from a user of

